of Educational & Vocational Training for Women (CCE&VT) under which preference is given to such marginalized women in the matter of providing assistance. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh is also implementing programmes, with special focus on marginalized women, under which financial assistance is provided for implementing self employment programmes through Non-Governmental Organisations. Other schemes such as National Old Age Pension Scheme and the Social Defence Schemes provide for pension and rehabilitation of such aged and marginalized women. As regards the question of widows in Varanasi, that Department has no information to furnish.

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has released grant-in aid of Rs. 5.82 lakhs during 1998-99 to Guild of Service, a voluntary organisation working for women in need, for implementing a project for the rehabilitation of widows of Vrindavan by providing them shelter, food, means of living, vocational training etc. Another grant of Rs. 14.04 lakhs has been sanctioned during the current financial year (1999-2000), 50% of which amounting to Rs. 7.02 lakhs has been released in October, 1999.

Recommendations to include or delete Castes in OBC List

1923. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Backward Classes has sent several recommendations to Government either to include or to delete some castes to the list of OBCs;

(b) if so, the details of those castes, State-wise; and

(c) the action taken against those recommendations sent by the Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) National Commission for Backward Classes has sent a number of Advices in respect of inclusion/ amendment in the Central List of Backward Classes. Action on the recommendations sent by NCBC is taken as per the procedure laid down in the matter. The inclusion/amendment made in the Central List of OBCs is notified from time to time. Recently, such changes were notified out *Vide* Gazette Notification No. 241 dated 27-10-1999 and No. 270 dated 6.12.1999.